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LETTER DATED 8 JULY 1999 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to convey the attached communication, dated 7 July 1999, which I have received from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

I should be grateful if you would bring it to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kofi A. ANNAN

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Annex

Letter dated 7 July 1999 from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization addressed to the Secretary-General

In accordance with Security Council resolution 1088 (1996), I attach the monthly report on the operations of the Stabilization Force. I would appreciate your making this report available to the Security Council.

(Signed) Javier SOLANA

Enclosure

Monthly report to the Security Council on the operations of the Stabilization Force

1. On 20 June, the mission of the Stabilization Force (SFOR) was renewed with the adoption of Security Council resolution 1247 (1999).

2. Over the reporting period (21 May-20 June), there were approximately 31,300 troops deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, with contributions from all NATO allies and from 16 non-NATO countries. SFOR troops continued to conduct surveillance and reconnaissance by means of ground and air patrols, with combat aircraft flying approximately 129 hours.

3. SFOR continued to monitor entity compliance with the provisions of Security Council resolution 1160 (1998) prohibiting the transport of weapons into the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and stepped up its efforts over the period to discover any undisclosed weapons caches. No violations of the resolution have been reported to date.

4. On 7 June, SFOR troops in Multinational Division South-West, acting within their mandate, detained an individual indicted for war crimes by the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. The individual, Dragan Kulundzijain, was later transported to The Hague.

5. Over the reporting period there were two incidents involving Federal Republic of Yugoslavia army troops in the border area. In the first, which took place on 26 May, near Rudo in Multinational Division South-East, members of an SFOR reconnaissance team were taken hostage, escorted into the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and interrogated for six hours before being released early on 27 May. In the second incident, on 27 May, SFOR troops encountered a group of Federal Republic of Yugoslavia troops near Bileca, inside Republika Srpska territory. The troops were persuaded to return to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

6. Although the situation in theatre remained stable overall, there were two direct instances of threats against SFOR and the international community over the reporting period. In the first, on 26 May, buildings belonging to the Joint Military Commission observers and the Allied Military Intelligence Battalion in Zvornik, in Multinational Division North, were attacked with light anti-tank rockets. There were no injuries, despite the fact that it was clearly a planned and coordinated attempt to threaten the security of SFOR personnel. SFOR troops responded by conducting unannounced weapons storage site inspections in the Zvornik area, by establishing checkpoints along the major routes into the town to search suspicious personnel and vehicles, and by working with the local police to gather intelligence. The investigation is still ongoing. In the second incident, which also occurred on 26 May, SFOR received a report of a bomb threat at the building belonging to the Office of the High Representative in Brcko. SFOR troops evacuated the building and moved the personnel to an SFOR base. No bomb was discovered.

Cooperation and compliance by the parties

7. The parties remain substantially compliant with the military aspects of the Peace Agreement. Tension in the Republika Srpska remained high owing to the continuing political instability there and to the NATO action in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. A significant increase in the number of returns of refugees and displaced persons was noted, although there were also two instances of violence in response to such returns.

8. In the first such incident, on 21 May, a group of around 100 Bosnian Serbs prevented a bus carrying Bosniacs from reaching the village of Vecici in Multinational Division South-West. SFOR troops reinforced the United Nations International Police Task Force and local police in the area, but the bus was eventually turned back to Travnik. The International Police Task Force served notices of non-compliance on the local mayor and on the chief of the local police for not doing enough to remove the protestors.

9. On 12 June a group of 40 Bosniacs were prevented by Bosnian Serbs from house-cleaning efforts in Grapsa Gorna in Multinational Division North. The Bosniacs were escorted from the area by SFOR troops.

10. Over the reporting period, SFOR conducted a total of 219 military weapons storage site inspections: 84 Bosniac; 25 Bosnian Croat; 95 Bosnian Serb; and 15 Federation. No significant discrepancies were noted.

11. The general training and movement ban imposed on the Entity armed forces on 24 March was lifted on 21 June. During the ban, the armed forces were nonetheless allowed to conduct training and movement activities for armed forces recruits, using light arms only, and with the prior approval of SFOR. Between 21 May and 20 June, 229 such activities were monitored: 80 Bosniac; 20 Bosnian Croat; 95 Bosnian Serb; and 34 Federation. The training and movement ban on the Republika Srpska Police Anti-Terrorist Brigade remains in effect until further notice.

12. Between 17 May and 13 June, 44 Entity armed forces demining teams conducted 642 mine-clearing operations, removing 3 anti-tank mines, 102 anti-personnel mines and 41 items of unexploded ordnance from 50,344 square metres of land.

Cooperation with international organizations

13. Within capabilities, and in accordance with its mandate, SFOR continues to provide assistance to the international organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the International Police Task Force, the Office of the High Representative, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

14. SFOR continues to play an active role in supporting the efforts of the Office of the High Representative to establish joint institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this context, the Standing Committee for Military Matters met on 4 June, for the first time since the Brcko arbitration decision and the consequent boycott of the central institutions by the Bosnian Serbs. Substantive progress was made, with the discussion of possible defence

reductions and with agreement reached on rules and procedures for the Standing Committee, including the provision of effective secretariat support. SFOR is continuing to work closely with the Office of the High Representative to ensure that concrete proposals for the new Standing Committee secretariat are in place by the time of the next meeting, and to ensure an effective follow-up to the debate on defence reductions.

15. SFOR also continues to provide support to the Office of the High Representative in its efforts to open airfields and to expand civil air operations. On 19 June, the airport at Tuzla was reopened.

Outlook

16. SFOR will continue to monitor the situation closely in the light of the situation in Kosovo. Isolated incidents can be expected as a result of the return of refugees and displaced persons.